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LYRICS OF LOVE

*and other Verse*

BY F. WEBER BENTON



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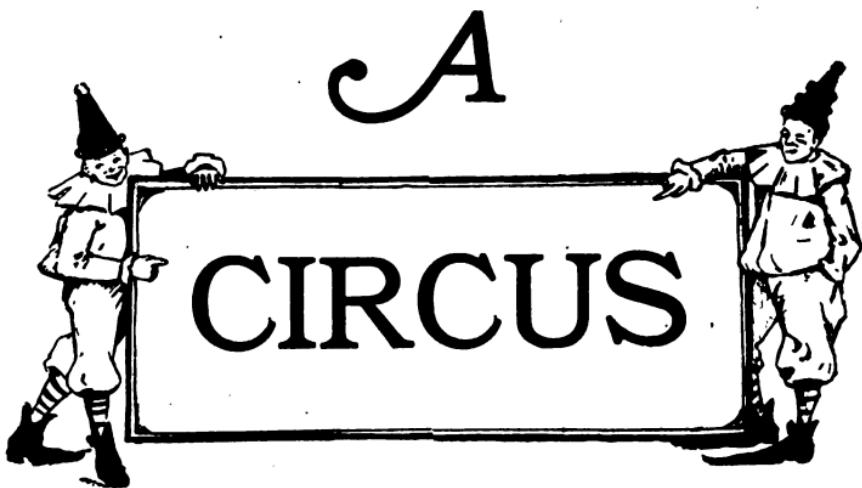
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# *MAN*

By Mary Binckly

WITH

*Lyrics of Love*

and Other Verse

By F. Weber Benton

BENTON PUBLISHING CO.

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GD

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# Indices

## Circus Man

Part First—The Wreck .....	9
Part Second—"Love Levels Rank".....	20

## Rics of Love

When the First Sweet Tale of Love Is Told.....	26
Sweeter Than Truth .....	27
The Sweetest Rose .....	28
The Songs She Used to Sing.....	29
What Is Love?.....	30
Can't Thou Forget?.....	30
Only a Heart .....	31
The Soul of the Rose.....	32
A Perfect Day .....	32
An Imperfect Day .....	32
A Holdin' Hands .....	33
The Lure of Living .....	34
San Dimas Canyon .....	35

## ics of the Sublime

Apostrophe to a Chasin' Titan.....	38
Fair Yosemite .....	40
Rainbow Canyon .....	42
The Moqui .....	43
The Desert .....	44
The Crags of Coronado .....	46
The Sierras .....	49
Gallagher's Last Ride .....	50
Retrospection by the Sea .....	52
The Rose of Ramona .....	53
Its What You Used to Be.....	55
Loyal a Mort .....	56
The Transgressor .....	57
How? .....	58
The Gold of Yesterday .....	59
Posies for You.....	60

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"Then leaning forward, far forward, until the lights from the stage fell upon her, she smiled, smiled full into the hungry eyes that searched her face, smiled bravely thru a mist of tears."

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# A Circus Man

PART FIRST

## The Wreck

Reynolds adjusted his immaculate collar and scarlet tie with a strong young hand upon the little finger of which glittered a startlingly large diamond.

The girl was extremely pretty, and the porter, laden with her bag and wrap, was leading her directly to Reynolds' section. She hastily laid her magazines, candy and flowers upon the seat and pressed her face close to the window, nodding and smiling at her friends outside the car.

Reynolds had watched these young people with interest. He had admired the girls and approved of the athletic lines that showed under the exaggerated fashion of the collegian's clothes, and frankly listened to their chatter.

"Just think," the Girl—he had already given her the center of the stage—had said: "I'm going to have an upper berth, and there were so many going down for the Fiesta I could hardly get that."

"Oh, don't worry; some hombre will have the lower and will yield it gracefully—poor old dub," one of the young men had responded consolingly.

"No," laughed a pretty dark-eyed girl, looking mischievously at the last speaker, a short, blonde boy; "he will be young and tall, and dark, and handsome, and he will—" The rest of the prophecy was lost in their ready laughter.

# NO. 111111 A CIRCUS MAN

## A CIRCUS MAN

Their conversation had not meant much to Reynolds; many of their allusions had been entirely lost on him, but he was nevertheless interested.

As the train started, all unconsciously he, too, leaned forward to see the last of the group. As his dark face, with its strong lean jaw and black-lashed eyes, appeared at the window, gazing innocently over the girl's shoulder, he wondered why a shout arose from the fast disappearing group and why she should have shrunk suddenly into her seat with an annoyed look upon her lovely flushed face.

They were scarcely out of the Sixteenth street station, with Oakland still in view, when she began to arrange her impedimenta and settle herself to travel with her back to the engine. She pinned a bunch of long-stemmed violets to the front of her gray coat, handed the rest of her flowers to the porter to take care of, selected a magazine and began to read. She entirely ignored Reynolds. He began to feel that there was something that he should do; some dim obligation weighed upon him. The words of the young collegian came to his mind. "Some hombr would yield up the lower." That was it. He had the lower berth. He did not know what hombr meant, but doubtless it applied to him.

"Excuse me," he said, leaning forward and looking at her with his serious eyes; "maybe you would like the lower berth—and to ride this side?"

His deep voice was singularly gentle, and his manner entirely free from anything but anxiety to offer her the very best available. The girl hesitated a few seconds, and then, after a slight demur, accepted his

## A CIRCUS MAN

offer and the exchange was made. She immediately became absorbed in her magazine again and he made no further attempt to speak to her. At times she was conscious of being watched, and on raising her eyes would encounter those of the stranger fixed on her and her possessions with open interest. When detected, he only smiled, an ingenious but rather pathetic smile. At her slight frown he averted his gaze instantly, as a child might have done. He made no attempt to read, but gazed about the car and into the gathering dusk with the same look he had bestowed upon her and her belongings.

Reynold's interest was very real. This was all a delightful experience to him, and a part of the realization of a long-worked-for and cherished dream. He watched the lights flash in his diamond and smiled proudly. It meant so much, that diamond. It represented Success. He thot of those hard, hard years, as far back as he could remember; those years of wretched living and fysical exhaustion; of days of drill and nights of painful and fearful performance before a gaping country crowd under a circus tent, his thin little trembling form tossed from man to man high up among the flying rings, close to the smelly glare of the flaming oil lights. What a nightmare it all was! But for Uncle Billy—Uncle Billy, the fat clown—who had taken rough but kindly care of him with the casual and hasty assistance of some of the overworked circus women, he felt he never could have come thru it. Reynolds thot of Uncle Billy with a pang, the only pang his new prosperity had brought. Uncle Billy had not lived to see his charge's success.

## A CIRCUS MAN

All that he knew of his long-dead mother, so gay and pretty, had been from Uncle Billy; and, too, of his young father, who had always intended to "bring the kid up to something better," but whose vague intention had been cut short with his spectacular fall from the top of a tent amidst the broken pieces of a glittering trapeze. And Uncle Billy had done well with his self-imposed task, had taught the boy, and



Uncle Billy, the Fat Clown

had hopes for him—hopes that somehow he could be brought up to that "something better." Reynolds thought, with a little throb of pride that he had done well. Was he not at the top of his ladder? One of the Reynolds brothers, famous trio, the highest-paid

## A CIRCUS MAN

trapeze artists in the world? He had not long been upon the circuit and his honors were new. He wore them modestly, but with infinite satisfaction.

He sighed luxuriously as he looked about the ornate Pullman, to which he was as yet so unaccustomed. Its padded plushiness, its gilding, its mirrors, appeared to him the very acme of elegance. It was a far cry from the circus—its crowds, its sawdust and its animal odors—to this! He sniffed the air delightedly. The perfume of the violets had spread thru the car. He was grateful to them and to the Girl. She and they were a part of it all; they added that last touch to make him quite satisfied. She was evidently a part of that great different world lying beyond the footlights. He had never before come into such close contact with one of those vaguely realized and entirely taken-for-granted people who had moved and fluttered like bright-winged birds before him as he swung from his lofty perch, cheerfully risking his fine young life nightly for their amusement.

Lost in his happy reveries, he had started when the "last call for dinner" rang thru the car and hastily made his way to the dining car. The girl was there before him, seated with her back to the door. While eating an oddly-selected meal, with a professional athlete's careful abstention, he amused himself watching the pretty women in the car and admiring the effect of the red-shaded lights as they glowed upon the bright hair of the Girl and brought out all her dainty perfection of finish.

Later in the evening, on returning from the smoking room, Reynolds found the berths made up, the

## A CIRCUS MAN



the monstrous mass rested upon the pink-clad shoulders of  
a mighty figure."

girl vanished and the curtains tightly drawn.

It suddenly came over him that his presence was

## A CIRCUS MAN

an intrusion. He felt that he had no right here. He experienced almost a panic when he thought of climbing into the upper berth. A wild thought of sitting up all night in the smoking room flitted thru his mind. But when he conquered his unaccountable sensation, and climbed with elaborate precaution silently into his berth, it was to fall almost immediately into the dreamsless sleep of the healthy and normal animal.

Toward morning Reynolds was aroused by being thrown violently against the side of the car. Frightful crashing noises, a hideous grinding and gritting, a confused roar, broken by piercing screams, beat upon his consciousness. Instantly he was wide awake, his mind calmly alert, his perfect body, trained to emergencies, awaiting its turn to serve him. The grind, the roaring and the rush stopped. The train, or what was left of it, had been brought to a standstill. But the screams rose with fresh energy and pierced the blackness of the unlighted car in agonized succession.

He felt that his berth had become loosened from its fastenings, and that the weight of some monstrous thing was pressing it and him down upon the lower berth. With a beating heart he heard beneath him a faint little cry. Realizing that his weight added to the imminent danger of the whole mass giving way and crushing to death the tender little form beneath, Reynolds, in the darkness, felt desperately about for foot-hold—for something strong enough to grasp with fingers and toes.

Calling an encouraging word to the girl in the

## A CIRCUS MAN

berth, he made his labored way to what had been the aisle, now cluttered with dislodged car furniture and the struggling forms of those who had escaped from their berths. With despair he tested the weight of the debris which pushed thru the top of the car and lay so heavily upon the berths. The girl was still alive and still unhurt, as her voice bravely assured him. But she lacked air, and a single jar might bring the mass down upon her.

The passengers were utterly demoralized. Reynolds realized that no aid could be expected from them. He must do it by himself. The thot of injury to that delicate young girl, so trustfully waiting for rescue, was intolerable—it maddened him. He had never known much of women, nor cared for any that had come into his life, altho many had smiled into his handsome eyes. But if he had smiled back it had been only the response of a friendly little boy. Now, altho he did not think it out clearly nor understand why, this girl, this stranger, had become infinitely precious—something that stood for all that was to be worshiped in women, for all that was good and beautiful in the great world. She was his mother whom he never remembered, wife and sweetheart and friend that he never had, little children, sunshine, music and flowers—all the things his starved life had all unconsciously missed.

With that dogged will that had made his success, helped by his present frenzy and his splendid strength, he fought his way thru the car, returning with a train employee carrying a lantern. This brakeman was carried along almost without volition on his

## A CIRCUS MAN

part, overwhelmed and confused, but Reynolds had his way and forced him to his will.

In the dim light of the lantern the deed was done that was scarcely believed when told afterward by the brakeman. Upon his knees in the aisle, the train-man at a sharp word of command, snatched the girl from the berth, while above them the monstrous mass rested upon the pink-clad shoulders of a mighty figure, a young Hercules, strained and terrible, unaccustomed to sustaining great weights, but bringing to the task magnificent muscles, a cool and unbounded grit.

For one second as the Girl passed thru the narrow passage made for her at such fearful effort, she opened her eyes and looked at him in wonder, and then, as she looked, she saw the shoulders heave, the neck, each cord extended, relax, the black head fall forward, the whole figure collapse, and instantly vanish from sight amidst debris which fell with a frightful crash.

When the wrecking crew removed the debris from Reynolds, it was found that his injuries were marvelously slight. Some bruises and cuts, a slightly sprained arm and hand, were about all, altho he was somewhat dazed and badly shaken up.

There were no deaths, and the wrecking train had brought the injured into Los Angeles. Reynolds, lying upon an improvised cot on the floor of the car, was conscious of voices outside the car and recognized that of the Girl, raised in eager explanation. The extravagant terms in which she, aided by the brakeman, described his conduct, brought a flush to

## A CIRCUS MAN

his face. It seemed like a dream already and the whole situation unreal.

Before he could realize it, he was being introduced to Mr. Everett, the portly, highly grateful and enthusiastic father of Miss Mary Everett, the Girl of this story. Someone's overcoat was thrown over his vividly pink pajamas, he was placed in a large and beautiful automobile and whisked over miles of smooth road, to be finally deposited in a marvelous bed room in a most marvelous house.

His experience could offer nothing with which to compare this house. The big hotels at which he had occasionally taken a meal or wandered thru in admiration, seemed now utterly unworthy to be considered. He was unable to define the difference, but he felt it, felt that this was the real and the other but a gaudy counterfeit.

## A CIRCUS MAN



**11:30 After the Show**

## A CIRCUS MAN

### PART SECOND

### "LOVE LEVELS RANK"

The next few days passed like a dream from which he dreaded to awake. It was characteristic of him that no tinge of envy marred his enjoyment. He took his unexpected gift from the gods graciously, without question. It was to him as tho he sat thru a beautiful play, performed for his individual benefit. He was free to recuperate from his injuries with an easy mind, because he and his partners had been thrown out of a week's engagement by reason of the burning of a theater, and their appearance in Los Angeles was not advertised for some days yet. His partners had taken advantage of the holiday to visit Santa Barbara, and it had been his intention, while they were there, to do some sightseeing on his own account.

Early in the days of Reynolds' visit, during a conversation with Mr. Everett, something had brought up the question of professions, and Reynolds had stated that he was one of the Reynolds Brothers. His statement had been made with an air of quiet pride, which had not escaped Mr. Everett. He had assumed that Reynolds was one of a certain large firm of that name who were known by reputation to him, and who were singularly successful and much admired in business circles. The older man thot he understood the young fellow's pride, and he liked it and its modest expression. This very modesty had been the reason why he was not enlightened as to the true posi-

## A CIRCUS MAN

tion in life of his guest, who, naturally quiet, was particularly so on the one subject upon which he felt he had a right to pride.

His rather loud clothes replaced by borrowed ones, the diamond covered by bandages, young Reynolds, with his magnificent physique, the natural good manners that are the result of perfect simplicity, and his charming smile, became quite a lion, achieved a social success in his first innocent plunge. Even his occasional lapses and often peculiar expressions were not frowned upon. He spoke so rarely and so quietly that they sounded rather quaint than objectionable. The entire family and the many friends who frequented the house insisted upon treating him as an invalid and a hero, and he was petted almost to death by pretty plump, Mrs. Everett, admired by the young sons, and heartily liked by Mr. Everett. Reynolds saw rather little of the Girl, as she went out continually, but when she was there she took entire possession of him, with the same pretty tyranny she showed toward the family and her friends.

Sunday night Reynolds left Pasadena, a homesick pang smiting him as he looked back at the lovely home amidst its lawns and trees and bright flowers. On Monday morning he sent Mr. Everett, by special delivery, a box for that night at the theater at which they Reynolds Brothers were to appear. The slight injuries sustained by the young athlete had been quickly thrown off by his bounding vitality, and he was now in the pink of condition.

The turn of the Reynolds Brothers was the third on the bill, but as soon as the curtain rose, Reynolds

## A CIRCUS MAN

was in the wings, anxious to see if the box was occupied. They were there. His eager eyes rested almost fondly on the box. He felt very proud of them all, these new friends who had been so wonderfully good to him. He had intended to point them out to his partners, but the idea now became unaccountably distasteful to him. He decided to say nothing of his box party. How different from all others—how like a rose she looked in her faint pink gown, he thought, wondering why she continually turned her head toward the back of the box. It was not until afterward that he learned she was watching for him, the host.

Just before his call, Reynolds surveyed himself anxiously before the glass in his little dressing room. But it would indeed be a critical inspection that could detect a flaw in the lithe young figure so magnificently displayed in the dazzling white silk tights, which brilliantly set off and vastly became the handsome dark head with its close-cropped curls.

Reynolds, swaying gracefully on his glittering bar, very near the box he had purposely chosen for the Everetts, was smiling at the girl who had not yet seen him, for she still watched the box entrance.

"Oh, Mary, look quick—your hero—oh, what a joke—your hero is A CIRCUS MAN!"

The gay young voice rang out clearly enough to reach the ears of the smiling figure on the trapeze. His gaze swept the occupants of the box. The mischievous girl who had spoken, Mr. Everett's deep flush, the blank surprise on the faces of the others—nothing escaped him. His gaze centered upon Mary. She colored violently and bit her lip.

## A CIRCUS MAN

A circus man! The words rang in his ears. Yes, that was what he was—a circus man, scarce a step above a clown. And they? They were beings of another world, a world unimagined by him in his poor dreams. The whole fabric of his happiness had crumbled beneath the light touch of one careless hand. In his simplicity he had never given a thought to the vast gulf between him and these people. What was this difference—this terrible difference that meant so much? It was not money; he made more in a night than some of those young men in the box did in a week—it was not looks; without vanity, he knew that few men could touch his physical perfection. It was not clean living; he had lived cleanly. What was it? A wave of bitterness, the first in his life—a bewildered, blind protest against the injustice of it all swept over him. Their shocked faces struck him like an unexpected blow. Why was he not fit to know them, these people who sat in the box. That was it—they sat in the box—would always sit in the box, while he, and such as he were on the stage, to risk their lives, to strain every nerve and muscle, to put their whole minds and bodies, the best there was in them—into making that risking attractive—to compel a wandering attention—to wrest a smile, a languid handclap from these people. It was not fair. Something was wrong. Gropingly, his hurt soul protested against this monstrous surprise, this crushing of all his gladness. She was one of them—what did she think? The audience, the stage, the whole world faded away from him. Pale under his dusky hair, he watched her, his

## A CIRCUS MAN

soul asking hers, "What do you think—what will you do? Nothing else matters but you."

Reynolds' partners, watching the pale set face of the World Famous Aerial Artist as he swung mechanically on his silver bar, were anxious, and played for time, performing together and endeavoring with all loyalty to cover his dereliction.

Mary Everett had turned in time to see the gay and confident smile upon the boy's face change in an instant to one of bewilderment, almost to fear, as the careless words reached him and his quick glance had swept the box. She saw thru a haze the glittering figure swinging in the air, and felt the eager young eyes, tragic with disappointment, on hers. A vision came to her of that one second when, snatched from the jaws of death almost clenched upon her, she had looked up at him looming large above her, holding back death itself with those tense shoulders, bearing the strain and the danger, making his supreme effort for her sake.

"Father," she said in a whisper, catching at his hand in the dusk of the box. Then leaning forward, far forward, until the lights from the stage fell upon her, she smiled, smiled full into the hungry eyes that searched her face, smiled bravely, thru a mist of tears.

LYRICS  
OF  
LOVE

**By F. Weber Benton**

## LYRICS OF LOVE

### WHEN THE FIRST SWEET TALE OF LOVE IS TOLD

Out in the moonlight I led my love,  
The night was still and the stars above  
Looked down upon us and seemed so bright  
As I told my tale of love that night.  
Oh! fair was my darling, ah, so fair,  
And blue were her eyes, all gold her hair;  
Who could blame me for loving her then?  
So I told my tale of love again.

#### Refrain

All the earth is glad and no heart is sad,  
For Love is born this day,  
And roses in bloom shed a sweet perfume,  
When soul to soul shall say—  
Ah! the words are old and the tale oft told,  
In sweet simplicity,  
Yet the lover true tells the tale anew:  
“Dear Love, I love but thee.”

The roses nodded and welcomed us,  
The soft winds blew and strolling thus,  
What wonder my soul went out to one  
As fair as the day when just begun,  
So I told my love in tender tone,  
And revealed my love for her alone,  
Then her eyes met mine and I knew full well  
All that her rosebud lips would tell.

## LYRICS OF LOVE

Oh, night of nights, sweet hour of bliss,  
Ne'er was there lover's love like this;  
Gone is the moment, but dear to me,  
Forever, till death, will the memory be.  
In all of life there comes not twice  
This hour of bliss beyond all price,  
When lovers meet as the day grows old  
And the first sweet tale of love is told.

## SWEETER THAN TRUTH

(A Telephone Romance)

Awake, and yet I seem to dream—a  
dream of one unknown—  
Unknown save for a merry laugh and  
voice of silvery tone.  
Sweet dream, stay on, thy spell fills  
all my soul with new-born bliss,  
And youth, life's priceless gem, is  
wooed by Cupid's kiss.

I know thee not and yet mine ear  
has drank the music of  
Thy dulcet voice that, 'twixt those coral  
lips breathe naught but love.  
Back thru the dreamy past to the days  
of my youth,  
The voice that beguiles me is sweeter  
than truth.

## LYRICS OF LOVE

### THE SWEETEST ROSE

I have seen the gorgeous sunsets  
and the skies of brightest blue,  
And oft have gazed on lilies when  
they glistened with the dew;  
The grand old ocean many times  
has charmed me with its might,  
And I oftentimes loved to revel in  
the glories of the night.  
The song of birds and children's laugh  
fill all my heart with glee,  
But there are things I love far more,  
and they are thots of thee.

I have known fair women's favors  
and have basked oft in their smiles;  
I have lived a life of loving as I  
traveled life's long miles;  
All the beauties known to nature  
I have loved and fondly scanned—  
From the dainty, nodding poppy,  
making gold of all the land,  
From the ever queenly roses and  
the violets sweet and blue,  
But there never yet was posie, or  
a rose as sweet as you.

## LYRICS OF LOVE

### THE SONGS SHE USED TO SING

Of all the songs most dear to my heart  
Are those oft' sung by my love;  
The years go by and we drift apart  
As clouds in the sky above,  
But the dear old songs—I hear them yet,  
And her sweet face I can see—  
And her love-lit eyes, I can't forget  
Or the songs she sang for me.

### Refrain

Now my heart is all a burning  
And my love is e'er returning  
For my love of long ago;  
And her sweet voice ever haunts me,  
While the story ever taunts me  
In the songs I used to know.  
As I often sit and ponder,  
Then my heart grows ever fonder  
Of the girl who wore my ring,  
But I miss her bright eyes shining,  
And my soul is still a pining  
For the songs she used to sing.

Oh, where is the voice so sweet, so clear?  
Oh, where is the singer fair?  
And what of the songs that charmed my ear  
By the lass so debonnair?  
Ah, the voice of my love I hear no more,  
Save the tones which mem'ries bring.  
Yet sweeter today than ever before,  
Are the songs she used to sing.

## LYRICS OF LOVE

### WHAT IS LOVE

And what is love?  
Love is a spell—a charm,  
A world of joy, or harm—  
A dream of bliss, a piercing pang of pain,  
And love may live and die and live again—  
For such is love.  
Ah! what is love?

Love is a song, now gay then sad,  
Whose soft notes make the fond heart glad,  
But the mystic muse full often brings  
Discord and strain to the fond heart strings—  
And that is love.

So, what is love?  
Love is Heaven, life and undefin-ed bliss,  
When hearts respond and lip meets lip in  
fervid kiss,  
But when the heart, enmesht in Cupid's spell,  
Has no response then love is Hell—  
Still, it is love.

### CANST THOU FORGET?

Altho apart canst thou forget  
a friendship long and true?  
Can time and space blot out for thee  
the old love for the new?  
Dost thou recall that once  
you said, "No matter what betide

## LYRICS OF LOVE

I'll be your friend forevermore  
and ever by your side?"  
"Now and forever" words you  
wove 'midst blue forget-me-not;  
Dost thou recall the precious  
gift or have so soon forgot?

### ONLY A HEART

(On reading of a Divorce trial)

Only a heart that is bleeding, only  
a pang and a pain;  
Only a love lost forever, never  
returning again.  
Only a memory remaining of days  
that were blissful and bright,  
And the shadows that ever are lying  
in the wake of the sunset light.

Only two hearts that are parted, but  
only one heart that will give  
A love all true, and a love all constant  
so long as that heart may live.  
And the days pass gloomily on and on  
and there's many a sigh and tear,  
For the heart that has truly loved never  
forgets till the cold, grim grave is here.

## LYRICS OF LOVE

### THE SOUL OF THE ROSE

She gave me a rose, and it withered;  
She gave me her love, and its dead,  
But the perfume rare of the rose so fair  
Will linger long years, it is said.

Ah! a vanish't love ne'er returneth,  
For most hearts can inconstant be,  
While the rose of today will live alway  
In its sweet perfume for me.

### A PERFECT DAY

Altho the day is dark without,  
And clouds bedim the sky,  
I do not feel deprest or sad,  
As time goes whirling by.

I do not feel the winter's chill  
Or heed the dreary storm,  
And tho the tempest rules without,  
Within 'tis bright and warm.

I know not that the heavens weep  
Or that the wild winds sigh,  
I only know I need no sun  
For, dearest, thou art nigh.

### AN IMPERFECT DAY

What matter if the sky is blue,  
Or if the sun is mild,  
Or if the roses bloom profuse,  
And all of nature smiled?

## LYRICS OF LOVE

What matter if the happy birds  
Fill all the land with song,  
Or if the springtime zephyrs waft  
The scent of buds along?

I know not that the day is fair,  
Or cloudless be the sky,  
I only know the day seems dark  
For, Dear, thou art not nigh.

## A HOLDIN' HANDS

In youthful days when all the world was gay,  
And Cupid reveled in romantic way,  
The sweetest joy to loving swain was when  
Their trembling hands in fervent grasp had been,  
How oft have timid man and coyish maid  
Besought the shelter of the arbor's shade  
Or side by side beneath the drooping bough  
In expectation of a lover's vow?  
But when the words the bashful swain would speak  
To find the spirit willing but the will too weak  
Until from somewhere a dainty hand would seek  
Another, telling more than tongue could speak,  
And oftentimes, at the play when lights were low  
Two hands would clasp and need no word to know.  
For words at best are empty, cold and weak—  
The pressure of a hand can better speak.

## LYRICS OF LOVE

### THE LURE OF LIVING

I like a watch, I like a clock,  
I like each moving thing;  
I like a field of waving grain  
And flowers in the spring.

I like the stars that wink and glow,  
I like the shifting moon;  
All things of life bring joy and cheer  
But pass away too soon.

I like to be right in the midst  
Of animation here,  
That's why I like the city life,  
Bright lights and noisy cheer.

It pleases me to watch the fish  
In their transparent home,  
Or look upon the honey bees  
That never cease to roam.

I like the fleecy, floating clouds  
That ever hurry by,  
And love to watch the sea gulls  
Up in the azure sky.

I never tire of surging throngs,  
Or street cars whizzing by,  
It makes one think of living and  
Not of the time we die.

## LYRICS OF LOVE

Give me life and love and laughter,  
And babies when they cry;  
I like the lure of living and  
I'll live until I die.

## SAN DIMAS CANYON

Down from the heights of the sierras  
A silvery streamlet flows,  
Where on the slender yucca's topmost  
point a creamy blossom grows;  
Along its gentle sloping banks the  
sycamores and willows rear  
Their graceful forms and cast a  
grateful shade throughout the balmy year;  
And the gentle winds are sighing,  
wafting sweetest perfume too,  
While the boughs are swaying ever  
as the sunlight filters thru.

There "Old Baldy" high above looks on  
and as a sentinel stands,  
Its peak, snow crowned and ever  
sun-kist upon these scenic lands.  
And here the wild flowers blossom,  
while the birds sing all the day,  
And the ferns grow tall in deepest  
green along the rocky way.

## LYRICS OF LOVE

Sunshine and shadows alternating  
vie with each other here,  
Over Natures choicest charms each  
day thruout the golden year.

Ah, if the singing brook could  
speak what tales of love and bliss might tell!  
For lovers oft have plighted troths  
within the quiet of the dell.  
And the gladness of the moments,  
by the crystal stream,  
In after years returneth as a  
pleasant, summer's dream;  
And the mountains and the pine  
trees, the green and mossy land—  
The red and yellow leaves of Autumn  
make a picture ever grand.  
I love thee fair San Dimas, not  
alone for thy sweet grace—  
I love thee most for mem'ries dear  
in thy calm and restful place.

# EPICS OF The SUBLIME

*J. Hobart Benton*

## EPICS OF THE SUBLIME

### APOSTROPHE TO A CHASM TITAN

(Grand Canyon of the Colorado)

O, mighty and appalling void! O, wondrous space:  
I, all abject, salute thee!  
I kneel in awe and reverence upon thy dizzy brink  
and think—all mutely.  
My tongue is stilled, my eyes burn in their shrunken  
sockets as I, wondering, stare  
On thy prodigious, yet sublime, unmatched immen-  
sity, and downward, where,  
Beneath the breast of earth, thou sprang to being in  
the womb of nature far away  
To hold thine all imperial reign, deep hid, forever from  
the light of day.  
Unthinkable thy vast proportions, how marvelous thy  
rugged steeps to scan!  
Thy birth pre-dates past centuries and mocks man's  
claim to immortality of man.

Conceived in throes of a seismic force and rent by  
Inferno's furious fire,  
A fissure thou became and cleft the granite of the  
grim sierras higher.  
And thru thy long and rock-ribbed boundaries a  
mighty, seething stream plunged down,  
Tearing at thy vitals and gnawing at thy feet un-  
mindful of thy frown.  
The red silt-laden waters from the far off north, thru  
Utah's mountain land,  
Sped on, a thousand miles or more, o'er boundless  
plain, 'twixt mountains tall and grand,

## EPICS OF THE SUBLIME

Till the vigor and the volume of Colorado's stream,  
thru years long past,  
Tore thee ever deep and dredged thee ever deeper,  
and its task is done at last.

No, not altogether finisht, for thru untold centuries  
to come and go,  
Those relentless waters will be flowing, on against  
their unresisting foe.  
Who may prophesy the future—of the deepening of  
thy depths, aeons hence?  
For vast and deep, Oh, canyon wierd, as thou appear  
today in boasted opulence,  
The ravages of flood and time will further wear away  
thy adamant abyss,  
Till, bottomless, the orbs of sky or eyes of man shall  
search in vain thy dark recess.  
But yet, enough! thy awful magnitude and grandeur  
of today—more than enough!  
The world knows not thy parallel—nor spot so grand  
and grim and great and strangely rough.

## EPICS OF THE SUBLIME

### FAIR YOSEMITE

The earth did sway and tremble, and near to the western sea

A spot of quiet beauty from grim chaos sprang to be

The marvel and the pride, for passing time till evermore,

Of cultured man and inspiration for the poet's lore.

Majestic mounts, there in their ever regal garb rise high

Above the beauteous valleys to the distant azure sky;

And aerial seas whose shimmering mirror bosom gleams

Beneath the mellow sheen of fair and chaste Aurora's beams.

From topmost heights, snow-crowned the granite domes smile ever down

On canyons, vales and slopes of alternating green and brown.

Soft purling rills sweep gaily on in transit to the sea,

'The while the sun shines over all and all of nature laughs with glee.

Aloft the eagle, bird of prey, soars high, the feathered king of day,

The timid doe and startled fawn, pause oft upon their all sequestered way;

## EPICS OF THE SUBLIME

**A**midst the flora, sweet with bloom and 'twixt  
the foliage of the trees

**F**lit happy birds thruout the day and touch with  
tune each passing breeze.

**T**he scenic splendor here to eyes of man unveiled  
is rare,

**N**or may the fabled charms of other lands afar  
compare;

**T**he artist's skill and colors true fail in attempts  
to show

**T**he charms and wondrous grandeur of the Eden here  
below.

**Y**osemite, thou garden fair, thou queen of vales  
and Nature's park,

**T**he glory of thy being is the lyric's theme  
when Angels hark

**T**o the story of its glory, and the melodies of  
cheer—

**T**hen the tuneful notes from the songbirds' throats  
fall sweetly on the ear.

**Y**osemite, thou art a spot in which to  
idly dream,

**E**nchanted nook where Flora smiles and  
laughing waters gleam,

**W**here lovers coo and linger in the luxury of  
Love,

**U**nheedful of the million prying starry eyes  
above.

## EPICS OF THE SUBLIME

### RAINBOW CANYON

Carved and colored by the one great Master Hand,  
The famed Sierras of Nevada grandly stand  
Near old Mojave's desert, barren sands  
And rose clad California's fertile lands;  
Snow-crowned yet ever sun-kist lift they high,  
Their hoary summits 'gainst the azure sky.  
For untold eons, since the world was new they slept,  
Yet silent vigils in an untrod realm have kept.

All seamed and scarred by countless seismic throes  
Those granite mounts assume fantastic forms;  
Long healed, their gaping wounds, of unknown foes  
Are dark and deep—the home of fitful storms;  
Tumultuous floods sweep down their rocky sides  
And swell the volume of the waters where  
The oftentimes raging river darkly glides  
Between those stolid cliffs so grim yet fair.

Deep and wide in alternating shade and light  
The scenic Rainbow Canyon has its home  
Within the massive hills, and blue and white  
And pink and gray its walls from base to dome  
Take on the varied hues the bow of promise shows;  
From sombre brown and deepest black the tints  
Shade into colors rich in ornate rows  
On which the mellow, midday sunlight glints.  
None but the Master artist's hand could paint  
A scene so rare and fair, so chaste and quaint;  
Nor may the skill of man e'er hope full true,  
To imitate in art so grand a view,  
For miles along the canyons' granite steeps

## EPICS OF THE SUBLIME

The many colored strata curves, and keeps  
Its never changing tint in harmony  
With Nature, here in grace and symmetry.

And here where silence long held full sway  
A strange, weird sound comes up the gorge to-day.  
On o'er the shining strands of steel a steed,  
Breathing of steam and flame, rolls on with speed,  
Bearing a burden of living freight from clime  
To far distant clime and lands remote sublime.  
The commerce of a nation claims to-day,  
Thru this fair canyon, all the right of way.

### THE MOQUI

Perched on the mesa high, secure from foe,  
The peaceful Moqui rears his simple home,  
And to his rugged height may come and go  
Yet ne'er afar shall hope or seek to roam.

Back in the gloom of hapless ages past  
He saw his native southern land despoiled,  
And forced by fiercest foe, on deserts vast,  
To new abode, o'er blistered sands, he toiled.

In peace he cultivates his sheep and corn,  
His blankets weave, his shapely potteries burn.  
Adown the rocky trail, at early morn,  
He wends his way, yet ever must return.

For, hunted still by unrelenting foe,  
He fears to wander from his eerie high  
And perfect safety may not hope to know  
While e'er the Navajos shall hover nigh.

## EPICS OF THE SUBLIME

### THE DESERT

Days came and passed and came and fled again,  
And still the parch-ed earth lacked dew or rain;  
The clouds forgot to weep but from afar wouldst  
frown  
The while the gorgeous sun would smile and cast his  
fires down.

On o'er the trackless desert sands, 'neath burning sun,  
Lost and alone, with naught of food or drink, went  
one,  
With weary steps, in vain to reach the desert spring,  
Which only to the famished pilgrim, life could bring.

No bird or beast, or tree or shrub was there—  
No blade of grass, or weed, or blossom fair;  
The arid land, bereft of cool wind's breath,  
Forbids intrusion of all things save death.

The blistered sands stretch far away and touch the  
sky,  
While ever on their breast the heat-waves flutter by;  
A mirage, thus the traveler, all athirst can see,  
What first to him a distant lakelet seemed to be.

And pressing on, the heart, with joy and hope beats  
high  
To see the precious waters of a pool so nigh;

## EPICS OF THE SUBLIME

Alas! the Ignis Fatuus chase soon ends, then hope is dead,  
And the vision mocks the dying in the waters "just ahead."

But lo! a sudden hope is now revived anew,  
Far to the east a bit of green comes dimly to the view,  
The spring is there, but even as he feasts his eyes  
Upon the waters near yet far, the pilgrim dies.

And all is dreary silence—heat and gloom prevail—  
No human voice doth here the victim's fate bewail.  
Unknown to friend and foe alike, he meets his doom  
And sinks to rest alone, within his desert tomb.

## EPICS OF THE SUBLIME

### THE CRAGS OF CORONADO

Storm-stained yet firm from out the ever restless wave  
Rise up those giant mounts, majestic in their briny  
grave.

In solitude, remote from kindred far inland,  
Like sentinels of the sea they proudly stand;  
Naught of their kind their sovereign sway disputes—  
Grim, ghastly and supreme their edict none refutes.  
Seismic of birth, when the world was young, those  
granite spires

Burst thru the sea, fresh from Inferno's furious fires;  
Chaotic in the womb of nature 'tis fitting then  
That tragic life attend them—as with men  
Who, having heritage of harm shall suffer pain,  
The which, by Nature's stern decree, they shall beget  
again.

An hundred centuries perchance have passed since  
they,  
Those mighty, mute, unyielding rocks first saw the  
day,  
Or, tow'ring high, gave silent vigil thru the inky night,  
Unheeding flight of time, nocturnal gloom or sun's  
bright light.  
Barren and bare on the rocky slopes no vernal ver-  
dures grow—  
From dizzy heights their turrets frown on the angry  
waves below.

## EPICS OF THE SUBLIME

Crude as when they first arose from out the ocean's  
foam  
Those rugged aisles, unsought by man become the  
home  
Of reptiles, and wild sea-fowl, and hideous creeping  
things,  
Horned toad and hare that oft' may know the rat-  
tlers' venomous stings;  
The sea-gulls roost upon the rocks or soar 'twixt sea  
and sky,  
Flapping their wings they rise aloft as the stately ships  
go by.

The Corpus Christi, like a tomb upon the sea afloat,  
A silhouette against the sky, sarcophagus in form re-  
mote.

In grawsome contour as the day grows old and dim—  
Forbidding sight—a ghoulish thing along the ocean's  
rim;  
And yet there is a grandeur in its stately solitude—  
An untold romance in its life and changeless mood.

Ragged and rough these magic isles invite no human  
life,  
Their caverns dark and canyons deep with ghostly  
forms are rife.  
Guarding the entrance to the bay of San Diego fair,  
They stand like sentries of the sea, all wisely stationed  
there,  
While Neptune, from his ocean home disports along  
the shore,  
Where dash and splash, with roar and moan, the wild  
waves evermore.

## EPICS OF THE SUBLIME

Far down in the darksome depths, the waters are still  
and cold,  
In their clammy grasp the lonely isles their briny  
arms enfold.

Their feet are laved forever in the selfsame salty sea,  
And amphibians strange about them glide in multi-  
plicity.

In those opaque shades supernal, grim leviathians of  
the deep

May spawn where the ship-wrecked sailors bones on  
the sands forever sleep.

The winds may moan and the sea may roll but those  
rugged cliffs shall stand.

Forever firm in their lonely pride, all silent, mighty  
and grand,

And their hoary heads shall lift above the surging of  
the sea,

When the world is old, when the earth is cold and  
man shall cease to be,

Their crags shall ever glisten 'neath the bright efful-  
gent rays

Of the fair and chaste Aurora or the Golden God of  
days.

## EPICS OF THE SUBLIME

## THE SIERRAS

Far from the haunts of men, over the mount and glen  
Solitude is king.

Dark in the cañon deep, there the clear waters leap  
And weirdly sing.

Deep in the mountains old, hid, lies a wealth of gold,  
And silver white.

Still the keen eyes of man may never chance to scan  
These metals bright.

Oft when the night draws nigh mournfully the night  
birds cry

And wild beasts howl;

Crude as when the world began, rugged this land to  
man

Where panthers prowl.

Rare is the man to here behold the works of nature  
grand and old

And not applaud,

And in his inmost heart declare "Naught is there  
greater anywhere

Than nature's God."

## EPICS OF THE SUBLIME

### GALLAGHER'S LAST RIDE

**An Heroic Incident of the Otay Disaster at San Diego**  
Cold was the night, and dark—dark as eyes of the  
blind;

And wild the wailing of the wierd and wanton wind.  
Bleak were the snow-clad mounts that, towering high,  
Grimly frowned they from the all beclouded sky.

Wept then the clouds as wept they never wept before,  
While madly down from mountain steeps, with awful  
roar,  
Came rushing streams that with each fleeting moment  
grew  
To rivers, as the peaceful valleys surged they thru.

Full to the brim the mighty dam, by floodtides over-  
fed,  
Bursting its bounds, in ghoulish glee, gathered a toll  
of dead;  
Nor tower, nor tree, nor town withstood the fury of  
its might;  
All, all went out to the storm-tossed sea in the inky  
pall of night.

But Gallagher heard a distant sound and he felt the  
earth to sway;  
He knew full well that the dam was gone and that  
Death was on his way.

## EPICS OF THE SUBLIME

Not a moment's time he gave to thot, save for countless lives below,  
And vaulting to horse he raced with Death, to all mankind a foe.

Swiftly thru canyon and rocky defiles to homes of the dwellers there.

He sped on his way, nor paused as he cried: "Beware, the dam, beware!"

Behind him surged the waters wild, nearer and yet more near;

He heard them but he faltered not, nor gave himself to fear.

Unmindful of his peril grim, unselfishly he sped,  
But altho fleet, his charger's feet, that down the Canyon led,

Were lifted by the raging flood that swept the vales and plain,

Engulfing in its mighty clasp the brave, heroic twain.

Score upon score of human lives were spared by this daring ride,

And for them he braved the danger and for them the hero died.

So its written in the archives of this noble deed well done,

And how brave Gallagher raced with Death, and how he lost—and won.

## EPICS OF THE SUBLIME

### RETROSPECTION BY THE SEA

The strand sands gleam and glisten  
As I stand by the surf and listen  
    To the surging of the sea,  
And my soul is filled with longing—  
My mind with memories thronging  
    Of the dead days gone from me.

The winds of ocean moaning  
Like the sound of bees a droning,  
    When the evening shadows creep,  
Seem a requiem ever fitting  
My sad fancies ever flitting—  
    Ever pleasant e'en in sleep.

O'er my feet the salt seas spatter,  
O'er my head the sea gulls clatter  
    As I listen to the song  
That the winds and waves are singing,  
Like sweet-toned bells a ringing  
    All the night and daytime long.

Sturdy fishers, nets a-mending  
With their labors never ending  
    Is a vision ever dear,  
For the toilers of the ocean—  
On the waves of endless motion  
    Bring remembrance always clear.

## EPICS OF THE SUBLIME

Winds and waves are all undying,  
Man beholds his moments flying,  
    And the end comes on apace,  
But the ocean murmurs never,  
For its life goes on forever  
    In proud grandeur and with grace.

Tho I feel a sense of sadness,  
Coupled with a certain gladness,  
    There's a void I cannot name,  
For the billows near me leaping,  
And the white foam toward me creeping,  
    Seem to mock a finite fame.

Still my hopes are for the morrow  
And the past holds only sorrow  
    That the scene revives to-day,  
And upon the strand sands drinking  
In the salt air I am thinking  
    Of Life's cycle passed away.

## THE ROSE OF RAMONA

The lily is fair as it blossoms there,  
'Neath the shade of the cottage home,  
And its perfume rare fills the evening air  
    When the dew bathes its fertile loam.

The violets blue are blooming for you,  
    In clusters their blossoms rear;  
Ah, their hearts are true and their fragrance too  
    Are charms of the passing year.

## EPICS OF THE SUBLIME

The carnations bright shinè eyes shall delight  
As their slender forms beckon and sway;  
All pleasing the sight of their garments of white,  
And colors both sombre and gay.

The poppies of gold their petals unwold  
For the kiss of the southland sun;  
Their legends of old are joyously told  
As they sleep when the day is done.

The lily is fair and the violets rare,  
They are nodding each day to thee;  
The carnations there in the balmy air  
Bring a breath of the south to me.

The poppy's gold hue and the violets blue  
Enchant as the gentle wind blows,  
But homage all true shall be given to you—  
Fair Ramona thou queen of the rose.

Oh, red is the rose of Ramona,  
More red than the sunset's glare,  
Or the grape of the goddess Pomona,  
That rivals our Flora fair.

## EPICS OF THE SUBLIME

### ITS WHAT YOU USED TO BE

They say it matters little what  
Your deeds were in the past,  
Its what your present greatness is  
When life is ebbing fast.

"Tis said 'twere vain to boast of deeds  
That long have passed away;  
That 'tis not what you used to be,  
But what you are today.

And yet, if youthful days are void  
Of Life's great battles gained,  
In after years few honors are  
Then seldom e'er attained.

The metal of the after man  
In youth will sparkle then,  
And 'twixt his youthful follies gleam  
The flame that glows again.

Success to man in after life  
Is but the fruit matured,  
That springs from youth's ambitious seed,  
To drought and frost innured.

Then say not that our early deeds  
Forever be forgot,  
Or that the triumphs of our youth  
Today shall matter not.

## EPICS OF THE SUBLIME

In truth the battles of a life  
Begin in infancy,  
We're proud of what we are today  
And what we used to be.

Of course I would not brag about  
Some things that I have did,  
Or advertise the naughty things  
I did when but a kid.

Or, later, why I went to jail,  
Or ran away to sea,  
Or print the story of my life  
Just as it used to be.

## LOYAL A MORT

Friends I have had by the score—and more,  
And all vowed their friendship, o'er and o'er,  
But one by one they fell away—to stay,  
Save one that I know will stay—alway.

All faithful and loyal, thru and thru,  
No kindness he would not do, I knew,  
No other has loved me so, I know,  
Or would shield me from the blow of foe.

When skies were dark and days were old, and cold,  
My friend more dear to me than gold, untold,  
Was ever near to share my cup, and sup  
The sweets of loving of a yellow pup.

## EPICS OF THE SUBLIME

### THE TRANSGRESSOR

Like the wretched worm I writhe and squirm  
As I sit alone in gloom,  
And review the days of my wanton ways,  
In my squalid unkempt room.  
have lived a life of greed and strife  
And my soul is steeped in sin,  
have known no good nor ever would  
For no good was there within.

So I sit and mope o'er a vanisht hope  
That sprang from the dreams of youth,  
And I fain would speak but my voice is weak—  
A stranger still to truth,  
Now I'm looking back o'er the beaten track  
Of plunder, pilf and gain,  
And the hearts made sad by my deeds all bad  
That have fostered only pain.

Thru all the years there are naught but tears  
To mark the paths I trod,  
And I heeded not but ever forgot  
Existence of a God.  
The friends I had were also bad,  
But even they have fled,  
And the joys of the past are gone at last  
And the hopes of my youth are dead.

So a life is done with no glories won,  
But only sin and shame,  
And ne'er a friend will stand at the end  
And sadly utter my name.

## EPICS OF THE SUBLIME

The day grows old and the night is cold,  
And my eyes are dull and dim,  
Forgotten the past and then at last  
Comes the grave forever grim.

### HOW?

How can I live my all too little life  
And rise to greatness without strife;  
Or gain success beyond my fellow men  
And keep their valued friendship then?

How can I battle 'gainst the world that battles m  
Without my having its great enmity;  
Or if, to go my simple way, I seek,  
How may I hope to rise above the weak?

How may I fame and competence attain  
Or aught of Earth's desired gifts to gain,  
And keep within the bounds of honor when  
I fain need cope with soulless, sinful men?

How may I tread the straight and narrow path of li  
When all converging paths with ruts are rife,  
And every turn and step I take are fraught  
With pitfalls 'gainst the goal I sought?

How may the man that 'neath a luckless star is born,  
From whose fond eyes are barred the charms of mor  
And ever pained by prick of thorns upon his brow—  
I say: "May such still hope to win—and how?"

## EPICS OF THE SUBLIME

### THE GOLD OF YESTERDAY

The hours today shall pass away,  
The future's a virgin page;  
So I fain must feel, the day's all real  
Are those of the present age.

And tho I yearn, I may not turn  
Me backward save in thot;  
The days I've known long since have flown—  
This day but ennui brot.

And yet I say, tho well today,  
And fair seems days in store.  
Come golden hours and life's sweet flowers  
Of yesterday no more.

### PARTING

To meet and part, and meet and part again—  
Something our lives may know of joy and pain.  
We part from those the heart to love has learned—  
From those for whom the fires of friendship burned.

Friends come and go, and come and go again—  
To meet we may, but part me **must**, and then—  
Regrets are vain for unkind acts—the dreary past  
Shall haunt until eternal parting comes at last.

## EPICS OF THE SUBLIME

### POSIES FOR YOU

I have gathered a bunch of sweet posies,  
For the one that is dearest to me,  
And I know they'll find a warm welcome,  
And be cherisht most dearly by thee.

They are not the most costly exotics,  
With ribbons and tissue entwined,  
But cost only pleasure to gather,  
And sweetest my searchings could find.

I am sending them now to you, Dearest,  
And when their sweet petals unfold,  
I know you will prize them as highly  
As tho they were purchased with gold.

### THE MOCKING BIRD

When sinks the sun at dewy eve,  
Or when it glows at dawn;  
Or when, at peace, in blissful dreams,  
The tired world sleeps on,

The mocking bird, in merry mood,  
Aloft in leafy maze,  
In cheery notes, for happiness,  
Warbles a song of praise.

## THE DESERT



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# THE SUNNY SIDE

Don't you like to be cheerful and give yourself at times to merriment and laughter?

A smile is sweeter than a sigh, and he who laughs is not ill. Therefore it is to laugh, and that you must if you read

## “SIMPLY STUFF”

By Heck, Per Simmons  
(F. Weber Benton)

### CARTOONS BY THE SCORE

The publishers of this monstrosity have no apologies to offer. Merely want it known that the "Stuff" was too silly to let it remain in its unwilling sarcophagus, so to speak, hence it is born as a book to roam the earth, and woe to its foes—if any, and if not, why knot?

But the funniest thing about it all—not that we lay claim to any humor—is that we have cut the price right in two—maybe three, going 50-50 with the public you know, 50 cts. the kopy, kash or koin, real money in fact. This may seem more foolish than funny, but we should worry.

Anyhow here it is "Simply Stuff," an exponent of joy and a sure cure for that ingrowing grouch. Laugh and be merry with us, live while you live and gather in every ray of sunshine that falls across your pathway. There is no pleasure in repining and the optimist would be a pessimist were it not for a cheerful streak in his nature. So cheer up and be with us—one of our happy million readers (more or LESS) and acquire a first mortgage on a long life, and don't forget the price, 50 cts.—should be less.

As a gloom-getter "Simply Stuff" is the king bee of chill chasers, the Jovial Josh of Joyland and an edition super de luxe thereof. If you are under a cloud get on the other side where the sun is always shining, airplanes are cheap, but if you insist on cultivating a mean disposition, make reservation for steerage in a German submarine and we see your finish. Don't do it, but ponder and purchase "Simply Stuff" only 50 cts., half cash and the balance in money.

DO IT NOW, delays are dangerous and tomorrow may be last Summer before you realize it is time for straw hats.

Punch in every word and line, scores of snappy cartoons and not a dry eye or a wet throat in the land. Get that?

Two silver quarters, twice the fourth part of a dollar, a couple of two bits, the equivalent of 50 pennies brings this mass of mush to your door—and we pay the freight.

DO IT NOW, there's no time like the present.

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